



## National Maritime Day 2021

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways celebrated the **58<sup>th</sup> National Maritime Day (5<sup>th</sup> April)**.

**Maritime India Vision-2030**, was also discussed at the occasion.

### Key Points

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- **About:**

National Maritime Day is celebrated **every year on 5<sup>th</sup> April** to commemorate the maiden voyage of the **first Indian flag merchant vessel 'S.S LOYALTY'** from Mumbai to London, on **April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1919**.

- **2021 Theme:**

**'Sustainable Shipping beyond Covid-19'**.

- **Significance:**

- It is celebrated **to encourage the merchant shipping industry of India**. Shipping contributes a lot to the country's economy.
- At present, **90% of India's international trade in terms of volume and 77% in terms of value is moved by sea**.

- **Other Initiatives:**

- **Sagarmala Initiative:**

The **Sagarmala Programme** was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2015 which **aims at holistic port infrastructure development along the 7,516-km long coastline through modernisation, mechanisation and computerisation.**

- **Project Unnati:**

The shipping ministry launched Project Unnati in 2014 under which efficiency of equipment was studied and every activity was scrutinised to identify excesses/mistakes.

- **Blue Economy Policy:**

The policy document highlights the **blue economy** as one of the ten core dimensions for national growth and It **emphasizes policies across several key sectors to achieve holistic growth of India's economy.**

- **Joined International Maritime Organization:**

- India is also a member of the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)**.
- IMO is a specialized agency of the **United Nations (UN)**. It is a global standard-setting authority with responsibility to improve the safety and security of international shipping and prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships.

- **National Waterways:**

As per the **National Waterways Act 2016**, 111 waterways have been declared as National Waterways (NWs).

- **The Sagar-Manthan:**

- Mercantile Marine Domain Awareness Centre has been launched.
- It is an information system **for enhancing maritime safety, search and rescue capabilities, security and marine environment protection.**

- **Ship Repair Clusters:**

They will be developed along both coasts by **2022**.

- **Ship Recycling:**

Domestic ship recycling industry will also be promoted to create **'Wealth from Waste'**.

India has enacted **Recycling of Ships Act, 2019** and agreed to the **Hong Kong Convention for Ship Recycling**.

## Maritime India Vision 2030

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- **About:**

- It is a **ten-year blueprint for the maritime sector** which was released by the Prime Minister of India at the **Maritime India Summit 2021**.
- It will supersede the **Sagarmala initiative** and aims to boost **waterways**, give a fillip to the shipbuilding industry and encourage cruise tourism in India.

- **Policy Initiatives and Development Projects:**

- **Maritime Development Fund:**

A **Rs. 25,000-crore fund**, which will provide low cost, long-tenure financing to the sector with the Centre contributing Rs. 2,500 crore over seven years.

- **Port Regulatory Authority:**

A **pan-India port authority** will be set up under the new Indian Ports Act (to replace the old Indian Ports Act 1908) for enabling oversight across major and non-major ports, enhance institutional coverage for ports and provide for structured growth of the ports sector to boost investor confidence.

- **Eastern Waterways Connectivity Transport Grid Project:**

It aims to **develop regional connectivity** with Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar.

- **Riverine Development Fund:**

Calls for extending low cost, long-term financing for inland vessels with the support of a **Riverine Development Fund (RDF)** and for extending the coverage of the **tonnage tax scheme** (applicable to ocean-going ships and dredgers) to inland vessels to enhance the availability of such vessels.

- **Rationalisation of Port Charges:**

It **will make them more competitive**, besides doing away with all hidden charges levied by ship liners to bring in more transparency.

- **Promotion of Water Transport:**

For decongestion of urban areas, and **developing waterways as an alternative means of urban transport**.

**Source:PIB**